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I, Haejin Kim , hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Organ.

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Organ Improvisation for Church Services: A Survey of Improvisation Methods from 1900

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Organ Improvisation for Church Services: A Survey of Improvisation Methods from 1900

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DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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by

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ABSTRACT

This document aims to provide a survey of organ improvisation methods from 1900 onward for use in modern church services. As a survey on this subject has not been recently done in English speaking countries, I have confidence that this document will serve an important role in developing this area. My specific intent is to provide a useful and significant resource for church organists who wish to improvise preludes, interludes, offertories, and postludes based on the melodies used for their weekly services. On a broader scale, it is my hope that this work will contribute to the development and reformation of service music through the use of creative organ improvisation.

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INTRODUCTION

Church organists increasingly face the problem of providing appropriate music for today's worship services. The concern of what to play outweighs the concern of how to play because, unlike in recitals or concerts, "organ music in the worship service is part of a larger context of liturgy or ritual."[1] This limitation makes it challenging to find appropriate organ music for a specific service – every nation, denomination, and church differs with regard to preferred hymns and service formats. Even though service music is properly chosen in advance and prepared within the context of the service, there is always the possibility of an organist needing to unexpectedly fill empty time. For example, church organists often need to play something corresponding to the message or mood for a particular part of the service, such as the prelude, offertory, communion, and postlude, as well as during prayer time and other short breaks in the liturgy. Improvisation offers a very viable solution to this problem – if an organist is able to provide music appropriate for any situation or mood without requiring advance preparation, the service can flow much more smoothly.

The importance of improvisation as a necessary skill for organists is emphasized in many sources. Harald Vogel points this out in his article "Improvisation," found in the journal *The American Organist*:

> Contemporary organ playing is marked as never before by an interest in the interpretation of music of the past. This is an unusual phenomenon of the 20th century, for, in earlier times, the emphasis of the musical activity of organists was not on interpretation, but improvisation.[2]

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1 Daniel Zager, "On the Value of Organ Music in the Worship Service," *The Diapason* 79 (June 1988): 18.

2 Harald Vogel, "Improvisation," *The American Organist* 20 (April 1986): 196.

It is assumed that until the 14th century most keyboard music was improvised.[3] Ornamented intabulations of vocal works performed through improvisatory procedures begin to appear in the *Robertsbridge Codex* (ca.1325) and the *Faenza Codex* (before 1420) two of the earliest extant documents of keyboard music. Improvisation methods shown in the *Fundamentum organisandi* of Conrad Paumann, like in many other manuscripts in the 15th century, provide evidence of the general use of keyboard improvisation.[4] The development of improvisation is described in several other sources, such as the *Tabulature* of Adam Ileborgh (1448), which appears as free improvisation, and Hans Buchner's *Fundamentum* (c.1520) and *Arte de tañer fantasia* (1565), which includes examples of imitative canonic and fugal figurations.[5] From the 17th century, traces of improvisations are clearly indicated in a number of organ compositions, such as the toccatas and preludes of Dieterich Buxtehude, Nicolaus Bruhns, and Georg Böhm. It is well-known that J. S. Bach, George Frideric Handel, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Liszt, Felix Mendelssohn, and Anton Bruckner had a remarkable ability to improvise on the organ. Especially, composers from the French organ school – including César Franck, Camille Saint-Saëns, Alexandre Guilmant, Théodore Dubois, Eugène Gigout, Louis Vierne, Charles Tournemire, Marcel Dupré, and Jean Langlais – continued to cultivate improvisation in both service music and concert music.

Marcel Dupré (1886-1971) was internationally famous for his astonishing improvisation concerts. During one such concert "he improvised a complete symphony in

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3 John Caldwell, "Keyboard Music, I: Keyboard Music to c. 1750." *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 23 April 2008), <http://www.grovemusic.com>

4 Imogene Horsley, "Improvisation, II, 2(iii): Western art music to 1600: Improvisation on 'perfect instruments'." Grove Music Online, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.grovemusic.com>

5 Ibid.

four movements based upon themes presented to him by members of the audience."[6] His influence as an improviser extends to the present day through his highly regarded *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation, Vol. I and II*. In its preface, Dupré states that "improvisation must be taught and must be learned according to the same principles and methods that are used in teaching virtuosity and technique."[7] This quote is revealing, illustrating the belief that improvisation is not just an inborn gift but is rather something that can be acquired through systematic training. In his method book *Improvising*, Gerre Hancock, a contemporary American improviser, lists three reasons to learn improvisation: for better interpretation of improvisatory works, for flexible performance for services and other occasions, and for better overall musicianship. In fact, he says, "our musical personalities are incomplete and underdeveloped if we are unable to express ourselves in a spontaneous fashion." Furthermore, he adds, "the ability to improvise is central to our musicianship; without it, musicians are simply not complete."[8]

In spite of the importance of improvisation in the organ world, a survey of improvisation methods from 1900 on reveals a significant dearth of sources for organ improvisation methods. As a review on this subject has not been recently done in English-speaking countries, I have confidence that this survey is necessary for developing this vital area. I will begin my document by reviewing methods that focus specifically on improvisation for use during church services; these will be fully explained in the first chapter. Since all of these methods address common concerns such as melody, harmony, technique,

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6 Marcel Dupré, *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation: Organ Improvisation*, trans. John Fenstermaker (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1974): ii.

7 Marcel Dupré, *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation: Preparatory Exercises for Free Improvisation*, trans. Alain Dobbs (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1962): iii.

8 Gerre Hancock, *Improvising: How to Master the Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): vii.

and form, I will categorize my document according to these issues starting from the second chapter. Methods from other sources such as short articles and existing literature will be added according to the needs of contemporary service music.

Chapter 1: Reviews of Major Method Books

This chapter will comprise reviews of several major method books of organ improvisation for use during church services; these include Gerre Hancock's *Improvising*, Marcel Dupré's *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation, Vol. I and II*, Jan Overduin's *Making Music*, Donald Rotermund's *Off the Page: Tips and Techniques for Creating Hymn-based Organ Settings*, Michael Burkhardt's dissertation "An Instructor's Manual for Teaching Hymn Playing and Beginning Hymn-based Improvisation," Petr Eben's *Protestant Chorales from the Canzional of the Bohemian Brothers: Choral Variations and Improvisation Models*, Michele Johns's *Hymn Improvisation*, and Everett Jay Hilty's *Practical Modulation and Improvisation.* As there is not a great variety of organ improvisation method books available for study, my research will include some articles from journals such as *The American Organist, Clavier,* and *The Diapason*. Even though these short articles cover only a few areas, sometimes they provide unique ideas or techniques with very specific examples.

Improvising: How to Master the Art by Gerre Hancock, is noteworthy due to the author's status as one of the best organ improvisers currently performing – this book has been used as a textbook in several major schools across the U.S. It is intended to be used for both individuals and groups as "an informal workbook, a compendium of very basic ideas that will point the musician in the proper direction on the road to the mastery of improvisation."[9] Hancock's belief is that improvisation cannot be methodically taught; thus, his book demonstrates practice techniques rather than providing specific rules. The ultimate aim of this book is "to help the improviser organize his or her ideas by means of a systematic

9 Ibid.

plan."[10] Hancock recommends two means of planning: "a "non-musical" or "written outline – that is, an outline in words – and an outline in musical notation,"[11] helping the musician to create improvisations with proper spacing, balance, and proportion. This book provides many basic forms for both concert improvisation and service playing, with chapters three through six (the interlude, hymn, ornamented hymn, and hymn prelude) being the most directly useful for use in church.

Hancock, like many other improvisers, praised Dupré's *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation* as being the most authoritative book on the subject. In his time, Dupré was an internationally well-known improviser and is still considered one of the greatest to this day; his method book is regarded worldwide as the best compendium among organ improvisation methods. The first of the two volumes includes the harmonization of melodic lines, delving deeper to deal with several varieties of phrase structures. The second volume deals with fundamental and practical issues, such as keyboard technique, registration, basic natural harmony, essential elements of theme, and various forms. Together, these two volumes contain knowledge in various areas that are essential for any aspiring improviser. Dupré says that the object of his book is "to help students of improvisation know quickly how to judge and dissect a theme, and to see immediately how best to make use of it so as to draw from it the interest, beauty, and emotion this theme could contain in its fullest form."[12] While the text is very well-written, the book covers topics that are probably too advanced for a beginner to use effectively; furthermore, it does not include many detailed techniques for church service improvisation.

Jan Overduin's *Making Music: Improvisation for Organists* was written to show that anyone with minimal keyboard skills is able to improvise. He teaches that improvisers need

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10 Ibid., ix.
11 Ibid., 45.
12 Dupré 2: v.

to be trained until they feel comfortable with integrating various ideas and methods into a broader improvisational technique. Traditional skills are emphasized first, followed by modern and then creative skills. Overduin focuses on specific harmonic, melodic, and structural topics to develop improvisation skills; these include harmonic vocabulary, variation, ostinato, sequence, melodic ornamentation, and toccata figuration, among others. Numerous musical exercises are provided, accompanied by the recommendation of playing each one in a musically satisfying way, even from the beginning stages. This book also includes effective outlines for improvising introductions and interludes for congregational hymns. I believe that this book is proper for both group study and personal study and can serve as a prerequisite method book before studying Hancock's *Improvising*.

Donald Rotermund's *Off the Page* is a very practical source for beginners, offering very detailed solutions for creating elaborate hymn-settings that employ only minimal changes. The techniques in this book are intended to assist in creating hymn introductions, thematic interludes, alternate hymn accompaniments, preludes, voluntaries, and postludes. Furthermore, he provides instructions for combining several techniques to create more elaborate or longer improvisations.[13] Rotermund provides appendixes of hymn tunes with suitable techniques along with their potential uses, and, as additional practical advice, he suggests notating suitable techniques in your personal organist's hymnal as helpful reminders while playing during services. Since most organists without any improvisational experience can easily learn Rotermund's techniques on their own, it is an ideal resource for church organists who are only beginning to develop their improvisation techniques. Many of the included techniques are drawn from the extant hymn-based organ works of Bach, Brahms, and Pachelbel, showing the possibilities of deriving valuable improvisation techniques from

13 Donald Rotermund, *Off the Page: Tips and Techniques for Creating Hymn-based Organ Settings* (Fenton, Missouri: Morning Star Music Publishers, 2007): 7.

existing literature. Although this book provides only simple solutions for hymn-settings, it is a very useful source for church organists who are beginning their studies in improvisation.

In his dissertation "An Instructor's Manual for Teaching Hymn Playing and Beginning Hymn-based Improvisation," Michael Burkhardt focuses mainly on pedagogical aspects, suggesting relevant materials and procedures; this is helpful, given that the teaching and learning process is a vital factor when compiling methods. Burkhardt reviewed various pedagogical materials, such as organ method books, hymn playing manuals, and organ improvisation texts; using these reviews as a basis he then wrote his own pedagogical text, one built around a group-learning environment focused on hymn playing and hymn-based improvisation. While Burkhardt provides detailed course materials – including representative hymn settings, keyboard harmony fundamentals, and a survey of hymnody, along with lesson plans – including topics dealing with melody, rhythm, harmony, and transposition – his dissertation mostly deals with basic improvisation and does not provide many direct methods for use during church services.

Petr Eben's *Protestant Chorales from the Canzional of the Bohemian Brothers* is unique in that it provides demonstrations of more modern styles of accompaniments, utilizing dissonance in creating short improvisations on chorales; these demonstrations focus on a method of linking the accompaniment of the chorales with their musical themes. He not only uses thematic elements, such as ascending or descending themes, as improvisation materials, but also several techniques such as text painting, canon, and ostinato. Eben also provides examples of various short improvisations (based on fragments of chorale melodies) that can be used as short preludes and interludes during church services. He also emphasizes that when improvising for a church service, an organist must never show off his own personality but rather provide the music which itself serves a larger purpose; unlike concert improvisations, service music must concentrate exclusively on the themes of chosen

hymns and should always finish in the proper key so that another verse may be sung.[14] However, while Eben provides many useful ideas for improvisation based on chorales, his book should not be considered an independent method in the normal sense.

Michele Johns's *Hymn Improvisation* is organized according to compositional forms: bicinium, ostinato, imitation, ritornello, toccata, and free form combinations. She provides several exceptional music examples for each improvisation technique she introduces and, more interestingly, includes organ service music written in the 20th century in addition to traditional literature. Johns highly recommends her book to be used only in a class of fewer than fifteen students, thus allowing every student an opportunity to play during each class. This book provides a 1986 course outline from her own fall school term, which itself can be a valuable resource to improvisation teachers. While this book only covers a limited number of techniques, each one is explained in great detail with very appropriate accompanying musical examples.

Everett Jay Hilty's *Practical Modulation and Improvisation* is "dedicated to the many church organists who have no trouble playing a service as long as the music is in front of them, but whose confidence vanishes when the printed page is taken away."[15] His book is divided into four parts. The first two provide many important practical methods for playing a smoother church service. The first part begins with basic harmony and teaches modulation devices such as pivot notes and sequential passages. The second part deals with traditional improvisation and modulation, including the circle of fifths, harmonizing hymn tunes, improvising on early English trumpet tunes, and more advanced modulation devices (such as common chords, diminished seventh chords, and pedal points). The third and

14 Petr Eben, *Protestant Chorales from the Canzional of the Bohemian Brothers: Choral Variations and Improvisation Model* (Wien: Universal Edition, 2002): i.

15 Everett Jay Hilty, *Principles of Organ Playing* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1971): 1.

fourth parts deal with various treatments of hymn tunes, such as ornamentation, various accompaniment styles, and devices for free improvisation (such as toccatas). This book includes very useful information dealing specifically with modulation and creating smooth musical connections during a single service; however, the overall content also covers a wide range of material.

Chapter II: Melody

Prior to discussing the first issue, melody, it is important to clarify that in the context of this document, "melody" means any horizontal musical line – this could include a newly-written melody, variations of an existing melody, or a countermelody. Most authors are in agreement in suggesting several methods for improvising a horizontal line:

1. A newly-written melody

In practicing melody improvisation, many teachers suggest various limitations: meter, tempo, character, tonal center, registration, voice, notes and rests of a certain value, a limited number of notes, intervals, compass, and devices such as inversion, repetition, diminution, sequence, retrograde, and transposition.[16]

Usually, authors suggest beginning with a single voice, using stepwise motion within an eight-measure phrase in various meters and keys. The following are practice methods drawn from the sources outlined in Chapter One.

1) The use of scales

Hancock begins by instructing the improviser to create simple melodies of eight measures within a single-octave scale in order to attain an intimate knowledge of each key; in fact, he believes that this knowledge is the most important for an improviser.[17] Hancock recommends a specific exercise that starts in the keys of C major and A minor (as seen in Examples 1 and 2), establishing a pattern and then repeating the same pattern in a new key a perfect fifth away – for example, from the keys of C major and A minor, the exercise would

16 Overduin, *Making Music: Improvisations for Organists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998): 6-7.

17 Hancock, 1.

move to the keys of G major and E minor.[18]

Example 1: Hancock, p. 1

'Improvising' by Gerre Hancock: © Oxford University Press, Inc. 1994. All rights reserved.

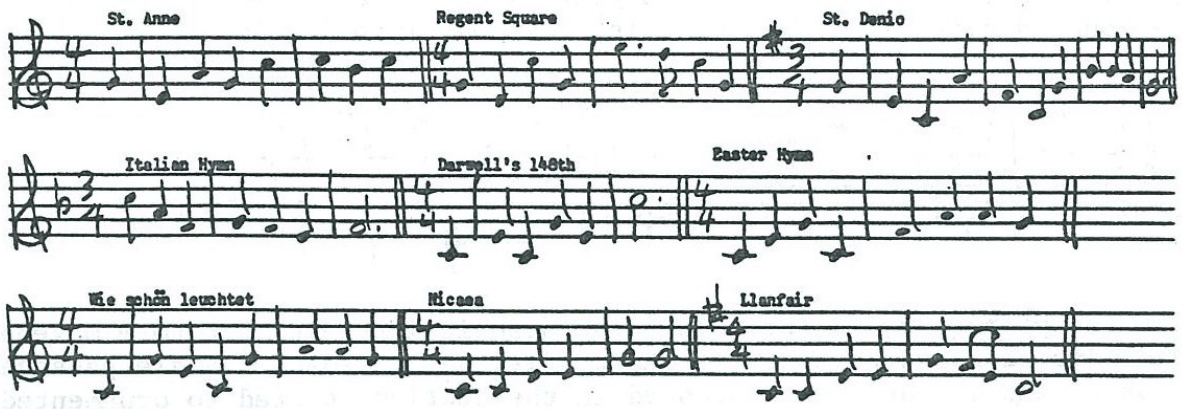
Example 2: Hancock, p. 2

'Improvising' by Gerre Hancock: © Oxford University Press, Inc. 1994. All rights reserved.

2) The use of a chord outline

One of the easiest ways to create a motive is to base it on a triad outline. Many well-known melodies, both secular and sacred, "begin with a triad using rhythmic variety, passing tones, auxiliary notes, and other devices to give the chord its uniqueness as a melody."[19]

Example 3: Hilty, p. 86



18 Ibid., 3.

19 Hilty, 86.

3) Improvising melodic lines over repeated two-chord patterns

Elaborating on two-chord patterns is a good way to practice melodic improvisation because "much if not most improvisation is an elaboration of music already composed, using techniques of variation that include knowing how to embellish chord progressions." Chords can be elaborated in various rhythmic and melodic ways such as arpeggiation, non-harmonic tones (such as passing tones, neighbor tones, and appoggiaturas), and other devices such as octave displacement, repetition, and rhythmic ostinatos.[20]

4) Improvising songs with I, IV, and V

With three primary chords, a simple song can be successfully improvised. "The most profound and memorable music is not usually complex, though it will have a judicious balance of predictability and unpredictability."[21] Overduin suggests creating a singable melodic line with both chord tones and non-harmonic notes (especially passing tones), counting out loud with measure numbers in order to develop rhythmic security. In fact, he suggests that a clear sense of rhythm is the most important trait for an improviser to possess.

5) Employing a variety of phrase types

Dupré details the common types of phrases: the antecedent and the consequent, the modulation consequent, and the deductive commentary. The knowledge of these kinds of

20 Overduin, 13.
21 Ibid., 55.

phrases gives us important ideas for improvising melodies.

A. The antecedent and consequent phrases

"When a phrase is constructed so as to require response or resolution by a following phrase, the two are said to be antecedent and consequent phrases, respectively."[22]

Dupré further mentions that if the antecedent ends with a half cadence, the consequent ends with a perfect cadence (a tonic cadence); if the antecedent does not end with a half-cadence, the consequent does not have to end with a perfect cadence.[23] Hancock suggests that the consequent should be the same length as the antecedent and that the two should have a close relationship rhythmically, thematically, and stylistically for complete balance.[24] He recommends one to first improvise without playing on the keyboard and then to play what you have improvised.

B. The modulation consequent

When a consequent phrase ends with a key other than the principal key, Dupré refers to such phrases as a "modulation consequent."[25] As with other improvisation exercises, he suggests transposing given melodies into the twelve keys through use of the circle of fifths.

C. The deductive commentary

As Dupré states: "If a theme is not answered by a consequent, but instead by a phrase which is completely different, this type of phrase is known as 'commentary.' If this phrase is inspired by the rhythm and melodic contours of the theme it is called 'deductive commentary.'"[26] As artistic commentary, he suggests avoiding an exact transposition of the figures in the subject, as can be seen in Example 4. In the Example 4-A, though the first three notes that are repeated a third lower, the last note C is transposed to B instead of A,

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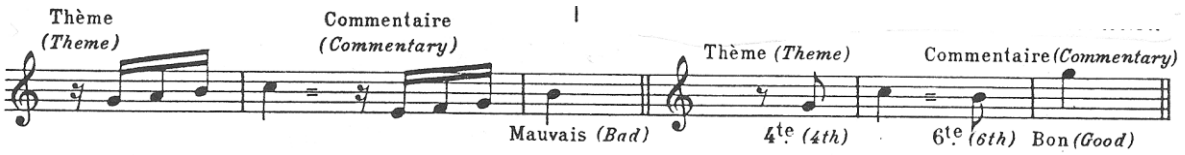
22 *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (1986), s. v. "Phrase"
23 Dupré, 1: 14-16.
24 Hancock, 21.
25 Dupré, 1: 18.
26 Ibid., 1:20

breaking the pattern. In the Example 4-B, the second iteration of the motive features a leap of sixth, as opposed to the initial leap of a fourth, again demonstrating Dupré's recommendation for avoiding exact transpositions.

Example 4: Dupré I, p. 23

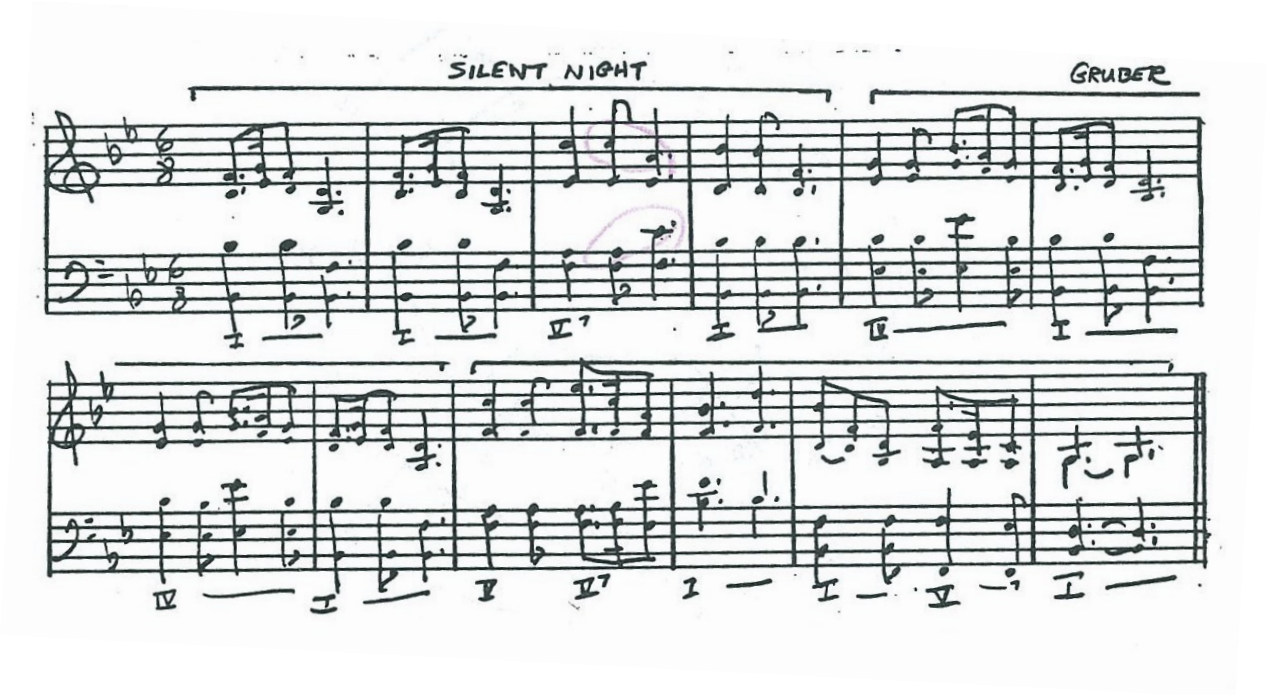
Example 4-A **Example 4-B**



6) The use of hymn harmonies and rhythms

Hilty provides a method of practice for improvising a new melody based on the harmony and rhythm of a hymn. After analyzing the hymn tune to understand its harmonic scheme, one should play it in four voices in every key according to the harmonic scheme, focusing on voice spacing and doubling, as can be seen in Example 5. Following this, Hilty advises improvising a new melody in the right hand over accompaniments containing the same harmonies and rhythm in the left hand and pedal – this can be seen in Example 6.[27]

Example 5: Hilty, p. 16



Example 6: Hilty, p. 17

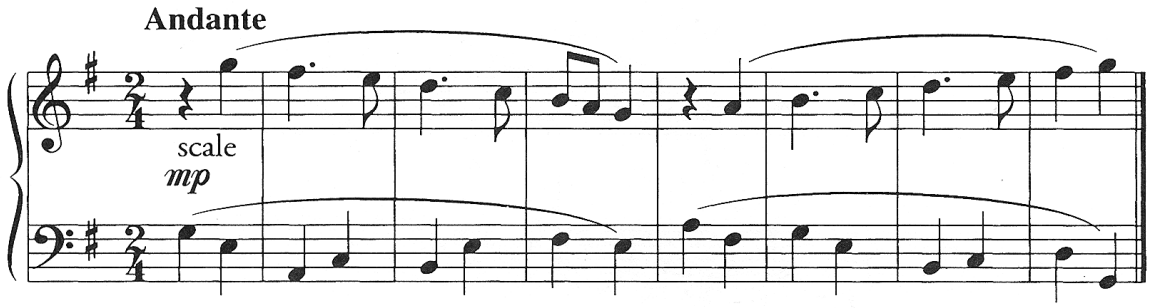
2. A countermelody

1) Adding a countermelody to a consecutive line

Both Hancock and Dupré offer exercises for adding a countermelody to a consecutive line such as a scale, a mode, a diatonic melody, or a chromatic melody (mostly within one octave, either ascending or descending without any skips or repeated notes). These exercises all require placing the given melodies in each voice. In Example 7-A, a G major scale first descends and then ascends stepwise within one octave in the top voice. On the other hand, in Example 7-B, the G major scale moves in contrary motion in the bass voice.

Example 7: Hancock, p. 3

Example 7-A



Example 7-B

'Improvising' by Gerre Hancock: © Oxford University Press, Inc. 1994. All rights reserved.

2) Adding a countermelody to a line with skips

After successfully adding a countermelody to a consecutive line, Hancock suggests practice with adding a countermelody to a line with wider intervals.

3) Creating a countermelody with a certain rhythmic pattern

One common practice for embellishing melodies is to create a countermelody by adding more notes to each tone of the melody while using a certain rhythmic pattern. For example, a quarter note against a quarter note for note against note, a quarter note against two eighth notes for one against two, a quarter note against triplets for one against three, etc as can be seen in Example 8. Hilty states that "rhythm is the primary basis for developing melodic interest, not note movement."[28]

Example 8: Hilty, p. 56

4) Countermelody in a contrapuntal texture

In order to be a skillful improviser, it is necessary to be able to improvise contrapuntal countermelodies. Most authors of improvisation method books suggest practicing this skill in various species: 1:1(note against note), 2:1(half against whole notes), 3:1(quarter against dotted half notes), etc., maybe up to 16:1(in 4/4, sixteenth against whole notes). Overduin recommends that beginners start with the pentatonic mode as can be seen in Example 9; because this mode hardly ever features severe dissonance, it allows for the improviser to focus on training the independence of the hands and feet.[29]

Example 9: Overduin, p. 30~31

28 Hilty, 85.
29 Overduin, 29.

'Making Music: Improvisation for Organists' by Jan Overduin © Oxford University Press Inc., 1998. Assigned to Oxford University Press 2010. Extract reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

3. Variations of the existing melody

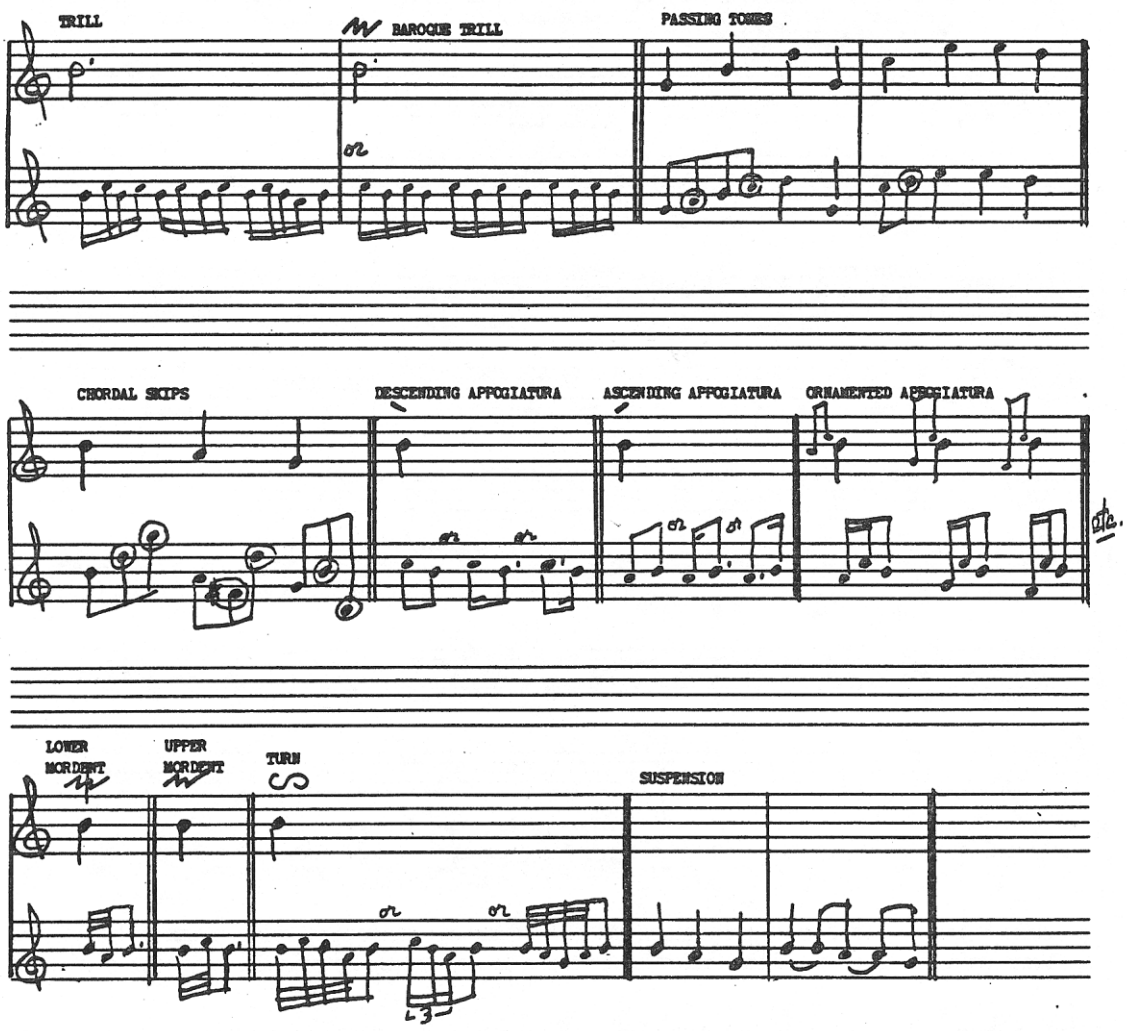
1) Ornamentation

"One of the earliest forms of church improvisation was the extemporization of ornamented hymn tunes."[30] Organists in the Baroque period were often expected or invited to embellish the cantus firmus of chorale preludes – not only to add color and rhythmic interest, but also to more successfully express the affect (mood, theme) of the hymn.[31]

Hilty illustrates this principle using simple ornaments -- trills, passing tones, chordal skips, appoggiaturas, mordents, turns and suspensions – as can be seen in the Example 10– and suggests adding ornaments to the hymn tune as a method of practice.

Example 10: Hilty, p. 37

30 Ibid., 37.
31 Ibid. 118.



Rotermund recommends "adding a trill or mordent on a longer note at the end of a major cadence,"[32] as can be seen in the Example 11, where a trill is added on the note B, a half note in the soprano voice of the cadential six-four chord.

Example 11: Rotermund, p.111

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32 Rotermund, 111.

Hilty, Dupré, and Hancock suggest the use of ornamentation in varying melodies, with Hilty and Dupré effectively explaining their methods by providing ornamented chorale preludes by Bach as examples. Example 12 illustrates the chorale "Das alte Jahr vergangen ist" with the melodic line presented on the lower staff as ornamented by Bach in his version for organ.[33] Bach elaborated the chorale melody with various ornaments, including trills, mordents, appoggiaturas, passing tones, neighboring tones, and suspensions, indicating these figurations either with ornament symbols or by simply writing out the ornamentations note by note.

Example 12: Dupré II, p. 58

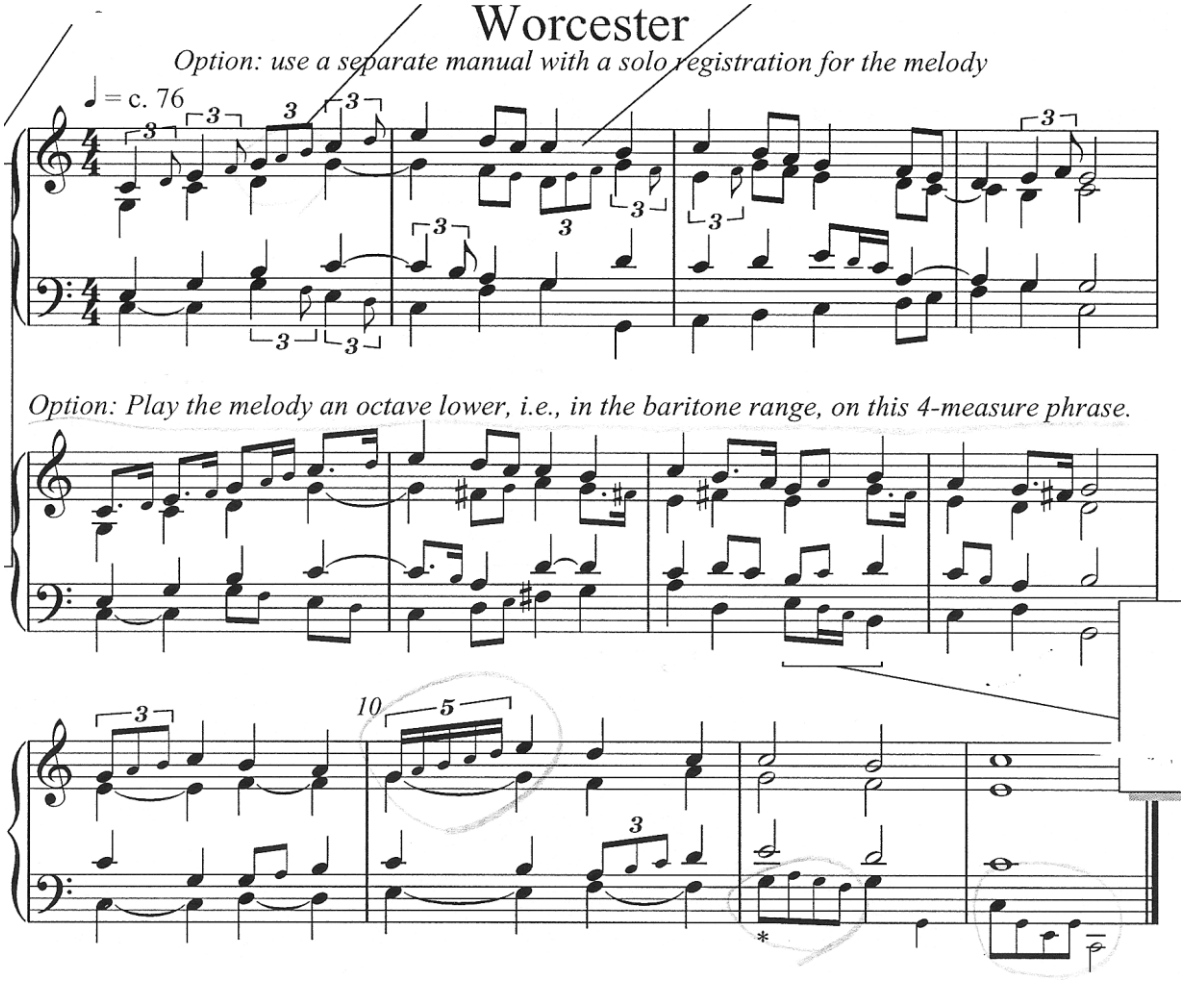
2) Filling-in Intervals

Overduin suggests filling intervals (larger than a second) when learning to improvise ornamentation. Dupré believes this technique is best suited to quarter notes and half notes

33 Dupré, 2:58.

separated by intervals of a third or a fourth.[34] Example 13 provides various illustrations of this technique by Rotermund. Passing tones with various rhythms are added between melodic notes in many places in Example 13. In m.11, upper neighbor tones appear in the bass part.

Example 13: Rotermund, p. 106


Worcester
Option: use a separate manual with a solo registration for the melody
♩ = c. 76
Option: Play the melody an octave lower, i.e., in the baritone range, on this 4-measure phrase.

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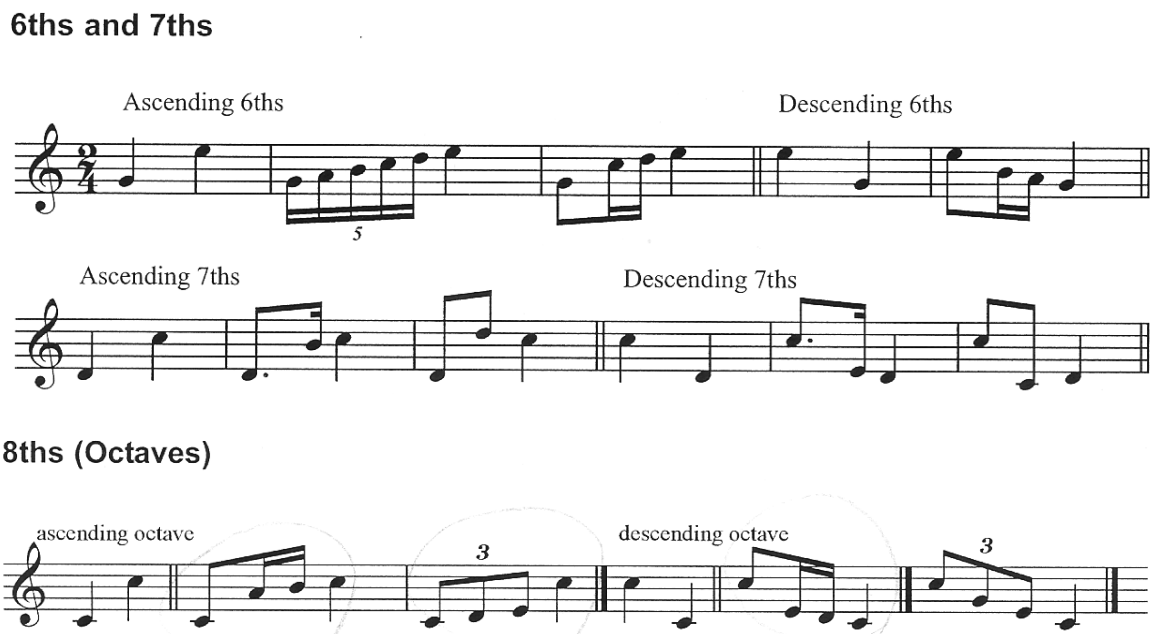
Rotermund also provides methods of filling-in larger intervals, such as 6ths, 7ths, and 8ths, as can be seen in Example 14. "The embellishing pitches should come from the scale in which the hymn is written."[35]

34 Ibid., 102.
35 Rotermund, 116.

Example 14: Rotermund, p.116



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3) Imitation of the existing melody

A melody can be reworked in a variety of ways, such as through canon, echo, augmentation, and diminution. It can be only partially stated (melodic fragments), and its intervals can also be partly modified. Example 15 shows this technique using St. Anne.

Example 15: Johns, p. 16

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Chapter III: Harmony

Most authors deal with harmony but vary in their approaches to this topic, which can be divided into two categories. Some authors begin by teaching the general rules of harmony, assigning exercises only after these guidelines have been fully explained; conversely, other authors proceed with techniques or exercises right away. The former category includes Dupré, Hilty, and Burkhard; the latter category includes Rotermund, Eben, Johns, Overduin, and Hancock. Dupré explains chords in detail, starting from the harmonic series and moving towards symmetrical chords for modulation. Since the purpose of Hilty's book is to help organists play a smoother worship service, his emphasis is on modulation, especially the use of pivot notes and diminished 7^{th} chords. Burkhard provides instruction on fundamental keyboard harmony as well as on basic harmony. Hancock, on the other hand, places importance on personal self-expression rather than on the concept of melodic harmonization, while simultaneously stressing that the general rules of harmony are needed as the foundation upon which improvisers are eventually empowered to create their own individual harmonic language and style. Many methods tend to avoid mentioning harmonization, believing this topic might confuse a beginner.

1. The harmonic series

The harmonic series is well-explained in Dupré's second volume. By using the harmonic series, he tries to show how our harmonic system – specifically intervals and chords – was generated. It is interesting to note that with the first twelve overtones, it is possible to recreate all the intervals contained in the octave.[36]

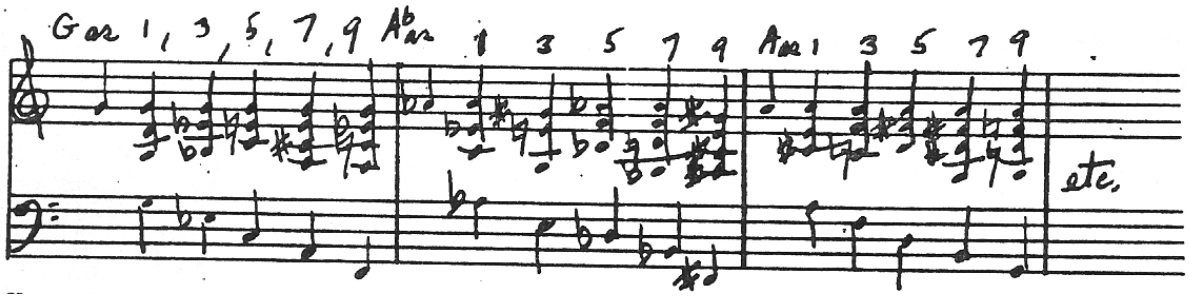
2. Chords

In his second volume, Dupré explains chords in detail: triads, seventh chords, and

36 Dupré, 2:18.

ninth chords. Hilty also provides basic information but, of more interest, also shows several methods of practicing chords for use in improvisation. He suggests practicing any given note in any voice as the first, third or fifth of triads, and as the seventh of a V7 and the ninth of a V9 chord, as can be seen in Example 16.

Example 16: Hilty, p. 6



3. Harmonization

Several authors suggest how to drill harmonization skills, emphasizing the importance of harmonization and familiarity with each key. For gaining comfort in all keys, Hancock suggests playing a common chorale tune with its original harmonization in all keys. Most authors recommend beginning harmonization exercises with eight-measure melodic lines.

1) Harmonizing scales and modes

"Since most melodies consist mainly of stepwise movement, it is very important and most helpful to become comfortable with harmonizing all scales, ascending and descending."[37] Overduin provides the basic formula for harmonizing scales with chords – one that works for both major and minor keys – in which the descending pattern is simply the reverse of the ascending. He recommends applying this formula to all twenty-four scales, first in keyboard style and then in solo style. Keyboard style involves playing the bass line

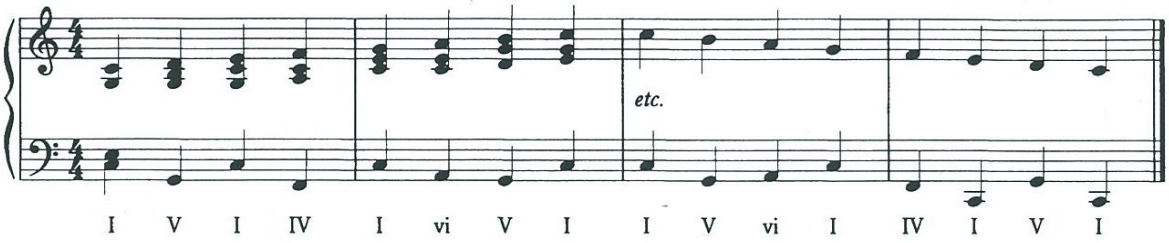
37 Overduin, p.90.

with the left hand or feet while playing the soprano, alto, and tenor lines with the right hand. Solo style involves playing the melody with the right hand on one manual, playing the inner voices with the left hand on another manual, and the bass line with the feet.

Ascending: I-V-I-IV-I-vi-V-I

Descending: I-V-vi-I(iii)-IV-I-V-I

Example 17-A: Overduin, p. 91



For minor keys, give preference to the harmonic minor.

Ascending: i-V-i-iv-i-VI-V-i

Descending: i-V-VI-i-iv-i-V-i

Example 17-B: Overduin, p. 91

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After learning to harmonize scales with one chord per note, do the same with two chords per note, as Romantic composers such as Johannes Brahms, Max Reger, and Sigfrid Karg-Elert did for greater expressiveness. The use of sevenths and secondary dominants will add further harmonic color as can be seen in Example 18. From mm. 1 to mm. 4,

sevenths are frequently used and V of V is used at the end of the mm. 3.

Example 18: p. 25 mm. 1~4,“Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten”in Dreissig Kleine Choral Vorspiele, op. 135A by Max Reger

In his first volume, Dupré begins harmonizing the twelve major scales and the twelve melodic minor scales, always placing the scale in the same voice: the soprano, the pedal, and the tenor voice. He suggests avoiding parallel motion and six-four chords, except as tonic or dominant chords. On the other hand, Hancock aims at developing the self-expression of each improviser rather than a strict harmonization of the melody.

2) Harmonizing melodic patterns

A. Melodic three-note stepwise patterns (tone-tone or tone-semitone), such as scale degree 1-2-3, are commonly harmonized with the formula I-vii°6-I6 and its reverse (tone-tone or semitone-tone), such as 3-2-1, with I6-vii°6-I. The harmony vii°6 can be replaced with V64 or V43.

B. Melodic pattern 2-1 (descending semitone) can be harmonized with a Phrygian cadence. It is especially useful when the melody moves from *fa* to *mi* in major keys and from *mi* to *re* in minor keys while the bass moves from *re* to *mi* in major keys and from *do* to *re* in minor keys.

C. Melodic pattern 2-1 (descending whole tone) may be harmonized in several ways,

such as V-I, I64-V, V-IV6, and V-VI.

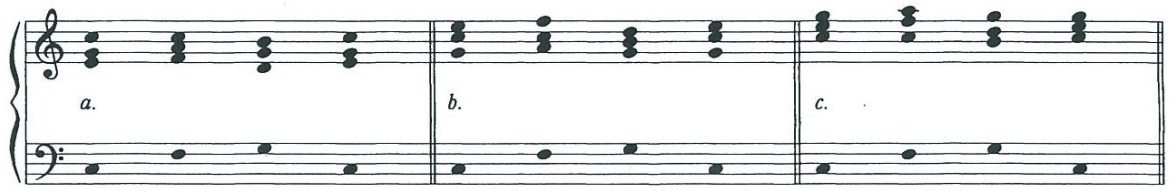
D. Melodic pattern 1-2 (ascending whole tone) may be harmonized with IV6 (especially the minor form of IV)-V.

E. Melodic pattern 1-2 (ascending semitone) may be harmonized using V-I, V-VI, and V-IV6.

3) I-IV-V-I progression

Overduin provides step-by-step instructions for practicing the harmonization of the I-IV-V-I progression. First, play this progression in all keys in keyboard style as shown in the example 19-A.

Example 19-A: Overduin, p. 41



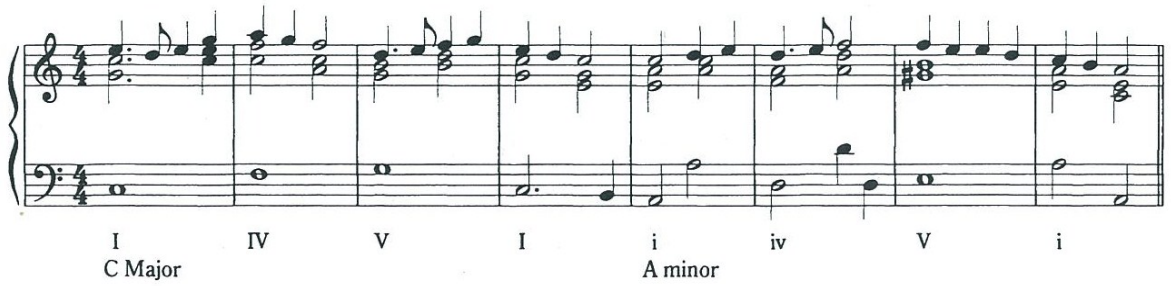
Next, expand each chord of this progression into a complete measure of music as shown in example 19-B.

Example 19-B: Overduin, p. 41

Combine two or more groups of I-IV-V-I from different keys into one piece in keyboard style as shown in example 19-C. Overduin suggests avoiding parallel octaves and fifths between outer voices and doubling the leading note. In this exercise, a student is required to play in one key while also thinking ahead to another key at the same time. It is

an important skill for improvisers to develop.

Example 19-C: Overduin, p. 41



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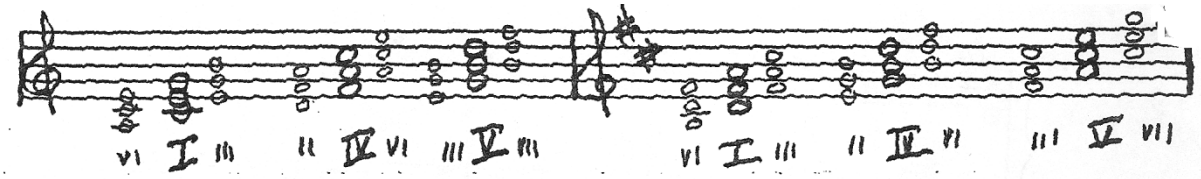
4) Harmonizing tunes or chorales

Hilty explains that "all diatonic melodies may be harmonized by the three primary triads, I, IV, and V, since the combination of these three triads includes every note in the scale. However, the use of secondary triads (ii, iii, and vi) and secondary dominants (V of V, V of IV) provides more variety and harmonic interest."[38] Each major triad has two minor chords that share two common notes with the major triad, as can be seen in Example 20.

Example 20: Hilty, p. 24



The lower minor chord serves as the most effective triad substitution; for example, vi for I, ii for IV, and iii for V.[39]

Overduin recommends beginning with tunes that have a slow harmonic rhythm and to transpose each melody to at least one other key, playing the major tunes in their tonic minor,

38 Hilty, 24.
39 Ibid.

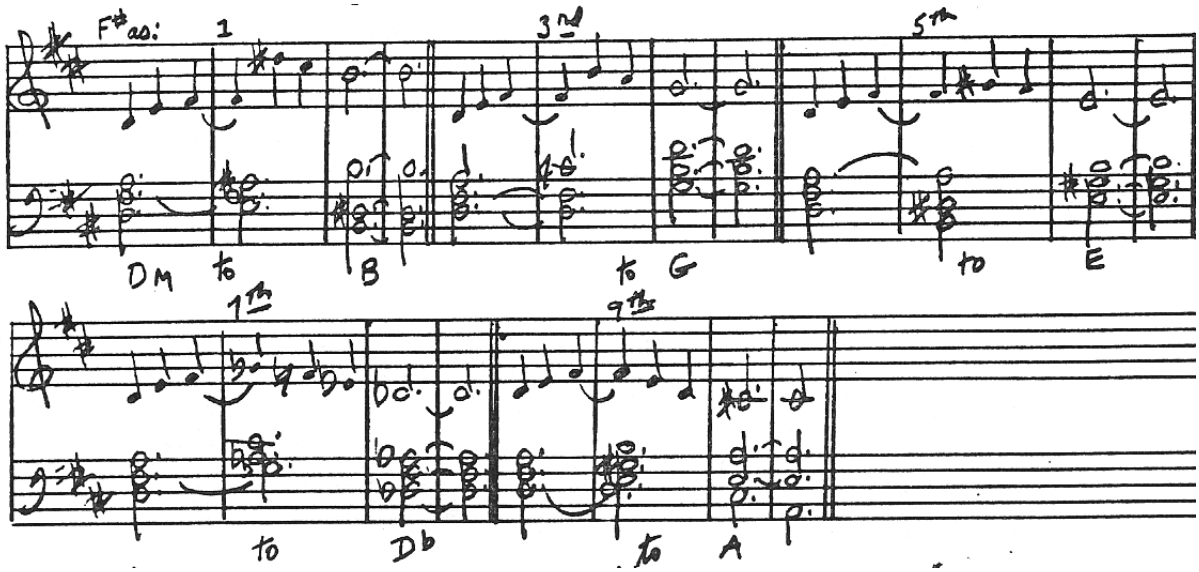
and vice versa. He also teaches that accompaniment patterns can often be determined by the character of the melody, advising improvisers to develop a wide repertoire of accompaniment patterns. To improve harmonization skills, Overduin also recommends playing a hymn from memory and harmonizing it, using primary triads in at least two different keys in keyboard style.

4. Modulation

1) Modulation by pivot note

Hilty teaches that the top voice can be considered as any number of different chords, such as those shown in Example 21; therefore, the top note can often serve as the pivot note when modulating to various keys.[40] For example, the third of the D major chord (F#) can be reinterpreted as the root of the F#7 major chord, the third of the D7 major chord, the fifth of the B7 major chord, the seventh of the Ab7 major chord, and the ninth of the E9 chord. In every case, the note F# functions as the pivot note for modulating to a new key.

Example 21: Hilty, p. 8



40 Hilty, 7.

2) Modulation by symmetrical chords

"The augmented fifth chord, which divides the octave into three major thirds, and the diminished seventh, which divides it into four minor thirds, constitute the two "modulating crossroads" of music. Either one can carry the music from one key to any other, according to the method of resolution employed."[41] Example 22 shows how the same chord can be used to modulate to various major and minor keys, requiring that only one or two notes of the chord descend or ascend a half-step or a whole step.

Example 22: Dupré II, p. 24-25

41 Dupré, 2:23.

1. Two notes stationary, one note descending a half-step.

C maj. A♭ maj. E maj.

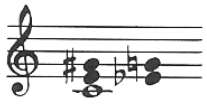
2. Two notes stationary, one note rising a half-step.

A min. F min. C♯ min.

3. One note stationary, two notes rising a half-step.

F maj. A maj. D♭ maj.

4. One note stationary, two notes descending a half-step.

 C min. E min. G♯ min.

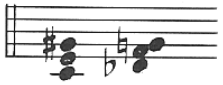
5. One note stationary, one note rising a half-step, one note descending a half-step.

D maj. B♭ maj. F♯ maj.

6. One note rising a half-step, two notes descending a half-step.

E maj. C maj. A♭ maj.

7. One note descending a half-step, two notes rising a half-step.

C maj.  A♭ maj. E maj.

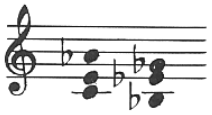
8. One note descending a whole-step, two notes descending a half-step.

E♭ maj. G maj. B maj.

9. One note rising a whole-step, two notes rising a half-step.

B♭ min. F♯ min. D min.

10. One note descending a half-step, two notes descending a whole-step.

 E♭ min. G min. B min.

11. One note rising a half-step, two notes rising a whole step.

G♭ maj.

B♭ maj.

D maj.

12. One note rising a whole-step, two notes stationary.

F maj.

D♭ maj.

A maj.

13. One note descending a whole-step, two notes stationary.

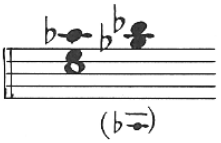
E♭ maj.

G maj.

B maj.

14. One note stationary, two notes rising a whole-step.

A maj.

F maj.

D♭ maj.

15. One note stationary, two notes descending a whole-step.

E♭ maj.

B maj.

G maj.

Example 23 shows how the diminished seventh chord can be used to modulate to various major and minor keys, with one or three notes ascending or descending a half-step.

Example 23: Dupré II, P. 26

1. Three notes stationary, one note descending a half-step.

D♭ maj. or min.

B♭ maj. or min.

G maj. or min.

E maj. or min.

2. One note stationary, three notes rising a half-step.

D maj. or min.

B maj. or min.

A♭ maj. or min.

F maj. or min.

3. One note stationary, three notes descending a half-step.

C maj. or A min.

A maj. or F♯ min.

G♭maj. or E♭ min.

E♭maj. or C min.

Hilty also considers the diminished seventh chord as a useful modulatory chord because while there are only three possible permutations of the diminished seventh, the possibilities of modulation are varied and numerous.[42]

3) Modulation with the four-chord method

The four-chord method in Overduin's book applies to modulations to all keys except for keys related by tritone – only in this case is an intermediary key required. For example, when modulating from F major to B major (related by tritone), it is necessary to modulate to C major first before moving to B major. The four-chord method, I-IV-V-I, may be used for fairly quick modulations, such as between the stanzas of a hymn.

Example 24: Overduin, P. 121

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42 Hilty, 34.

As can be seen in Example 24, the first chord (I or i) is always in the old key and the last two chords (V-I or V-i) are always those of the new key; however, the second chord (IV or iv), the pivot chord, can be from either the old key or the new key. Overduin states that "in modulations to the flat side, IV of the old key will be preferable, while IV of the new key will be more appropriate in modulations to the sharp side" and the form of IV, major or minor, can be decided "which form of IV is the most friendly to both keys."[43] Instead of IV, the diminished seventh chord can be substituted in this four-chord method.

4) Modulation with a sequential passage

Hilty suggests that modulating with a sequential passage creates more harmonic interest.[44] Example 25 demonstrates a smooth and interesting modulation from the original key (in this case, F major) to a new key (G major) through the repetition of a two measure-passage at different pitch levels. Moreover, unity is achieved by the use of melodic and rhythmic sequences and the balancing of phrases from the second system to the second measure of the third system.

Example 25: arranged by Frederick Swan, p. 8~9, mm.23~39, "Lobe den Herren" of "Hymns of Praise and Power"

43 Overduin, 121.
44 Hilty, 11.

PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY
Arranged by Frederick Swann
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5) Modulation to closely related keys

Hilty says that "each key has five near related keys to which a modulation can be made quite simply."[45] He recommends dominant chords, sub-dominant chords, and relative minor chords for modulation.

Example 26: C major --- relative minor: a minor

--- dominant: G major --- relative minor: e minor

--- sub-dominant: F major --- relative minor: d minor

In addition to those keys, Hancock recommends employing parallel major and minor keys – they share the same dominant chord, which can be major as well as minor. He emphasizes that "these realizations open up many helpful possibilities."[46]

45 Hilty, p. 31
46 Hancock, 47.

Overduin recommends the circle-of-fifths method when there is no need to hurry in modulating from the original key to the new key. When the key moves to the flat side, the improviser should modulate to the subdominant key, continuing in this way until arriving at the new key. As an example, when modulating from F major to A-flat major, one would progress in this way: F to B-flat to E-flat and finally to A-flat.

Chapter IV: Forms and Techniques

Careful study of these method books and articles yielded many valuable techniques. Several methods include complex forms; however, since mastery of the fundamentals will invariably lead to an understanding of more advanced forms, I will only include information on basic forms.

1. Imitation

    1) Canon

A canon is one of the most useful devices for an improviser, as it functions well in short pieces as well as extended works. In addition, canon works well in slow meditative pieces along with triumphant pieces, where it is especially effective for climaxes and dramatic endings.[47]

A. Hancock and Rotermund introduce the easy canon in which "the leader voice makes a statement and then becomes motionless while the follower voice repeats that statement."[48] In Example 27, the follower voice repeats the statement of the leader voice one octave higher while the leader voice sustains the last note.

Example 27: Rotermund, p. 170

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B. At the octave or unison and at the interval of a fifth

Rotermund suggests first practicing canon improvisation at the unison, as shown in

47 Overduin, 159.
48 Hancock, 133.

Example 28, or at the fifth.[49] For beginners, stepwise patterns (especially scales) are best suited for canons at the octave; the distance of one bar is common and generally the norm.

Example 28: Dupré II, p. 54

2) Augmentation and diminution

This technique can be practiced by playing the melody and adding the same melody in subsequently longer or shorter note values in the other hand or in the pedal. In Example 29, the same melody is repeated in the lower voice with augmentation; that is, with longer rhythmic values.

Example 29: Johns, p. 15

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3) Echo

Rotermund and Overduin both discuss echo effects, which are created by repeating the last part of selected phrases in existing hymn settings. Sometimes echoes are doubled

49 Dupré, 2:54.

and their effects multiplied with different dynamics and timbres; this is achieved through the use of different manuals, different registrations, the swell box, by reducing a part or parts, or by altered cadences, as can be seen in Example 30.

Example 30: Rotermund, p. 28

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This technique appears in the chorale preludes of Brahms, Reger, and Karg-Elert, who add echo cadences to the ends of each phrase, such as the sample by Brahms shown in Example 31. When repeating phrases for echo effects, cadences can be altered in various ways. For example, V-I may be replaced by V-vi (VIb) or V-IV6 (iv6), and these cadences can be extended by continuing to IV (iv)-I. In example 31, the second echo of the first phrase ends with vii^{o}/vi-vi instead of V-I.

Example 31:"O Welt, ich muss dich lassen" by Johannes Brahms: Rotermund, p. 30.

O Welt, ich muss dich lassen
O World, I Now Must Leave Thee

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2. Ostinato

Ostinato is a common feature of music but appears frequently in music of the Baroque period and the 20th century; for example, J. S. Bach's Passacaglia in c minor or Ravel's Bolero.[50] Ostinato is also frequently used by improvisers due to the unity and coherence it provides; when improvising with other players or singers, ostinato technique also provides for freedom and easiness. The persistently repeated pattern of an ostinato may be mostly melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic. A harmonic ostinato can be created by alternating a few different chords, while two second inversion triads are appropriate for melodies in almost any key because of their unstable sound.[51]

When improvising on a hymn tune, ostinato figures can be determined by the character of the text. "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," arranged by Craig Phillips, offers an example of the highly effective use of ostinato. Examples of ostinato as a melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic tool can be seen in Example 32. The repeated figurations successfully express the text of the hymn – the expectation of Christ's coming.

Example 32: Craig Phillips, mm. 25~33, p. 20, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" in "Wondrous Love"

50 Johns, 9.
51 Overduin, 78.

O COME, O COME EMMANUEL
Plainsong. Arranged by Craig Phillips
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3. Sequences

"A sequence is the repetition of a chord pattern at a higher or lower pitch and is one of the improviser's best friends providing structure, a tonal plan, coherence, a sense of purpose, and motion."[52] Practice harmonic sequences in all keys by playing the bass line in the circle of fifths, either moving down by fifths or up by fourths.

4. Ritornello

Ritornello, inspired by the Baroque-era alternation of solo instruments and orchestra, contains contrasting musical material in meter, tempo, color, theme and/or key center. The ritornello material can be related to the original hymn melody through inversion, re-

52 Overduin, 97

harmonization, and altered rhythm.[53] Conversely, the ritornello could be unrelated to the hymn entirely and be freely composed. For example, in "God of Grace," by Paul Manz, the ritornello is not related to the original hymn but still manages to intensify the strong and brilliant mood of the text by incorporating a quotation of the first four pitches of the "Hallelujah Chorus" of Handel's *Messiah,* as shown in Example 33.[54]

Example 33: "God of Grace" by Paul Manz: Johns, p. 20

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5. Rhythmic subdivision

The rhythmic subdivision of bass notes creates a moving and pulsating effect either through the use of simple repetition, changes in the octave or register, or the addition of non-chord tones besides the printed bass notes, such as passing tones and neighbor tones. This

53 Hilty, 19.
54 Ibid., 20.

effect is demonstrated in Example 34.

Example 34: "Ich ruf' zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ" by J. S. Bach: Rotermund, p.38

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6. Changing voices

1) A melody in a different voice

Simply placing a melody in a different voice creates variety in the musical color; many pieces based on hymn tunes use this technique. When playing a hymn tune in the bass part on the pedal, the melody can be easily re-harmonized without intentionally altering the chord progression. Play other parts with the hands and practice to create an accompaniment with beautiful descants.

When playing a hymn, simply shifting one of the melodic parts (alto or tenor) one

octave higher can create a descant while leaving the harmony unchanged.[55] In many cases, these alto and tenor parts need to be melodically polished with passing tones, neighbor tones, or suspensions. This technique, descant, is an effective method for expressing the words of hymns.

2) Alternating voices

Alternating the inner voices of hymns creates an entirely new middle voice. This technique can be used for various hymn improvisations during a church service. Example 35 shows the beginning phrase of the original hymn setting of "Dundee" while Example 36 illustrates a method for creating new middle line, with the alto and tenor voices alternating with each other.

Example 35: Chorale "Dundee": Rotermund, p. 67

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Example 36: Rotermund, p70

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55 Hancock, 59.

Examples 37 and 38 show more elaborated middle lines created by alternating inner voices, using tenor-alto-alto-tenor as a four-note motive in most of places.

Example 37: Rotermund, p. 71

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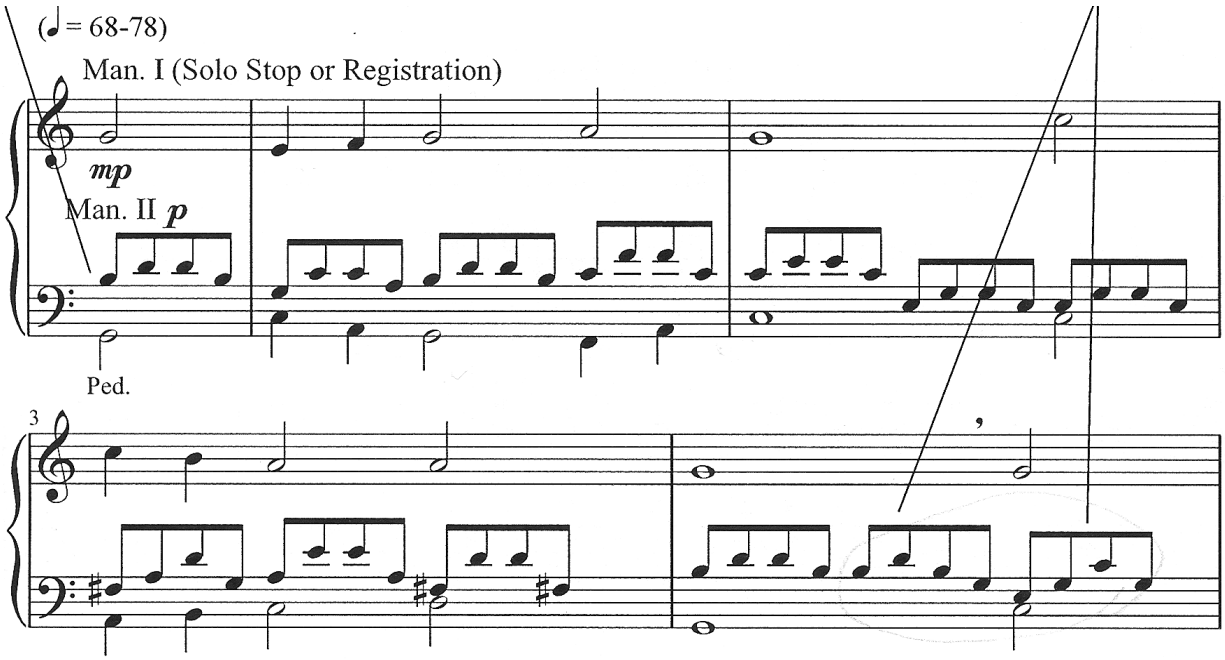
Example 38: Rotermund, p.72



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7. Changing meter and rhythm

Changing meter and rhythm can help create interest by altering the mood of a piece of music.

1) Changing meter

Specifically, changing meter refers to the transformation of duple meter to triple meter and vice versa. This affects the length of the accented beats, resulting in either longer accents (duple to triple) or shorter accents (triple to duple).[56] Example 39 illustrates the transformation of triple meter to duple meter, resulting in the shortening of the lengths of the accented beats.

Example 39: Rotermund, p.89

Westminster Abbey
Initial 4-measure phrase in the original 6/4 meter.
Westminster Abbey
In duple meter, with notes of equal duration.

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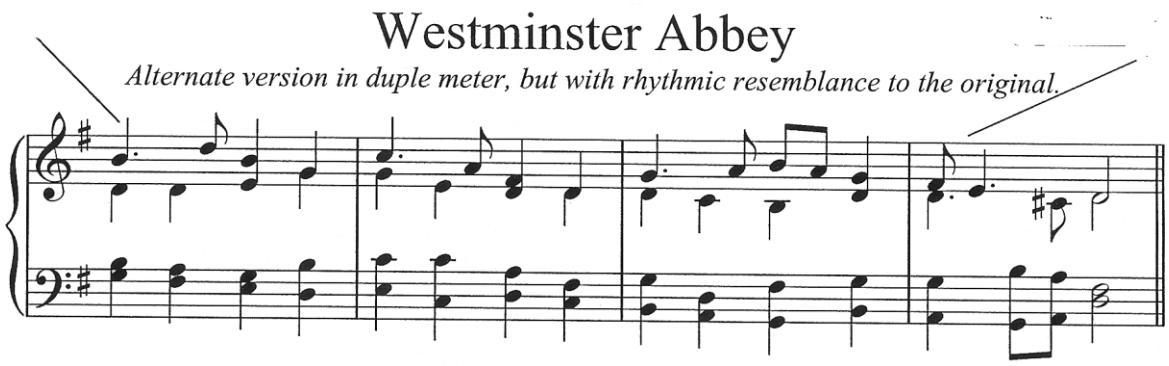
2) Changing rhythm, including syncopation

Changing rhythm and adding syncopation provides an opportunity for increased rhythmic interest and variety. Syncopation can either occur in the melody or in all voices; it

56 Rotermund, 82.

can also be used in the accompaniment voices. In Example 40, the rhythm of the soprano voice is modified to more closely resemble the original version while syncopation is added in the last measure, resulting in more rhythmic interest.

Example 40: Rotermund, p. 89



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8. Changing textures

Simply changing the texture of a hymn, especially by using well-chosen registration, is a wonderful tool for attracting the listeners' attention to the service music. The following example 41 illustrates the striking effect of changing textures from one voice to four voices. The increasingly complex texture – gradually growing one voice at a time at the beginnings of select phrases – is calculated by Warren to best express the tension of Lent.

Example 41: arranged by Norman Warren, mm.1~5, p. 146, "Passion Chorale" in "One Hundred Hymn Preludes"

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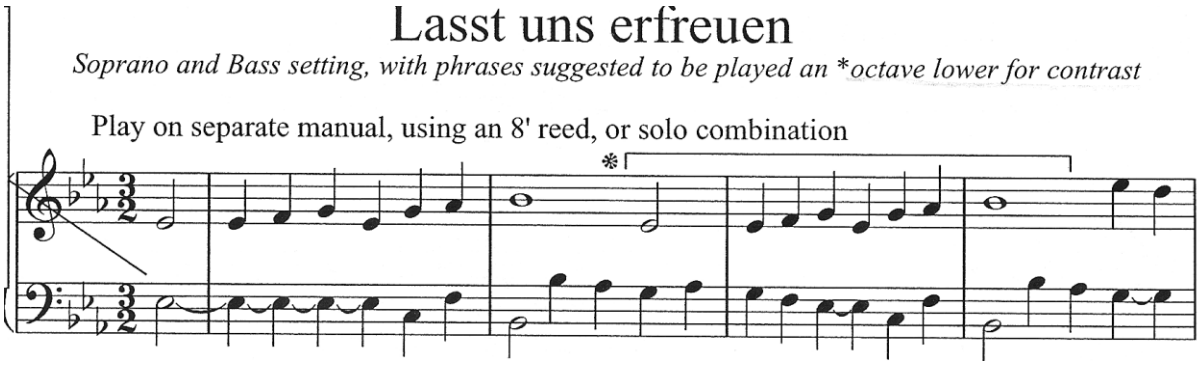
9. Octave displacement

When repeating the same phrase, Rotermund suggests playing the second statement an octave higher or lower for contrast; this is shown in Example 42, where instructions are provided to play "an octave lower for contrast."

Example 42: Rotermund, p.125


Lasst uns erfreuen
Soprano and Bass setting, with phrases suggested to be played an *octave lower for contrast
Play on separate manual, using an 8' reed, or solo combination

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10. Suspensions

The toccatas and *capriccios di durezza* of the 17th-century keyboard composers were mainly written with suspensions as their compositional foundation. Short fantasias can be created by playing descending scales in thirds or in sixths but with only one voice moving at a time as can be seen in Example 43. Suspensions may be embellished with all sorts of figurations, including octave leaps.[57]

Example 43: Girolamo Frescobaldi, mm. 1~7, *Toccata no.3*

57 Overduin, 74.

Overduin provides several suggestions for incorporating suspensions in hymn-playing, a technique that can help the congregation better appreciate musical phrases. Both prepared and unprepared (appoggiaturas) suspensions are significant ways of shaping cadences in hymns, most often in the alto or tenor part.

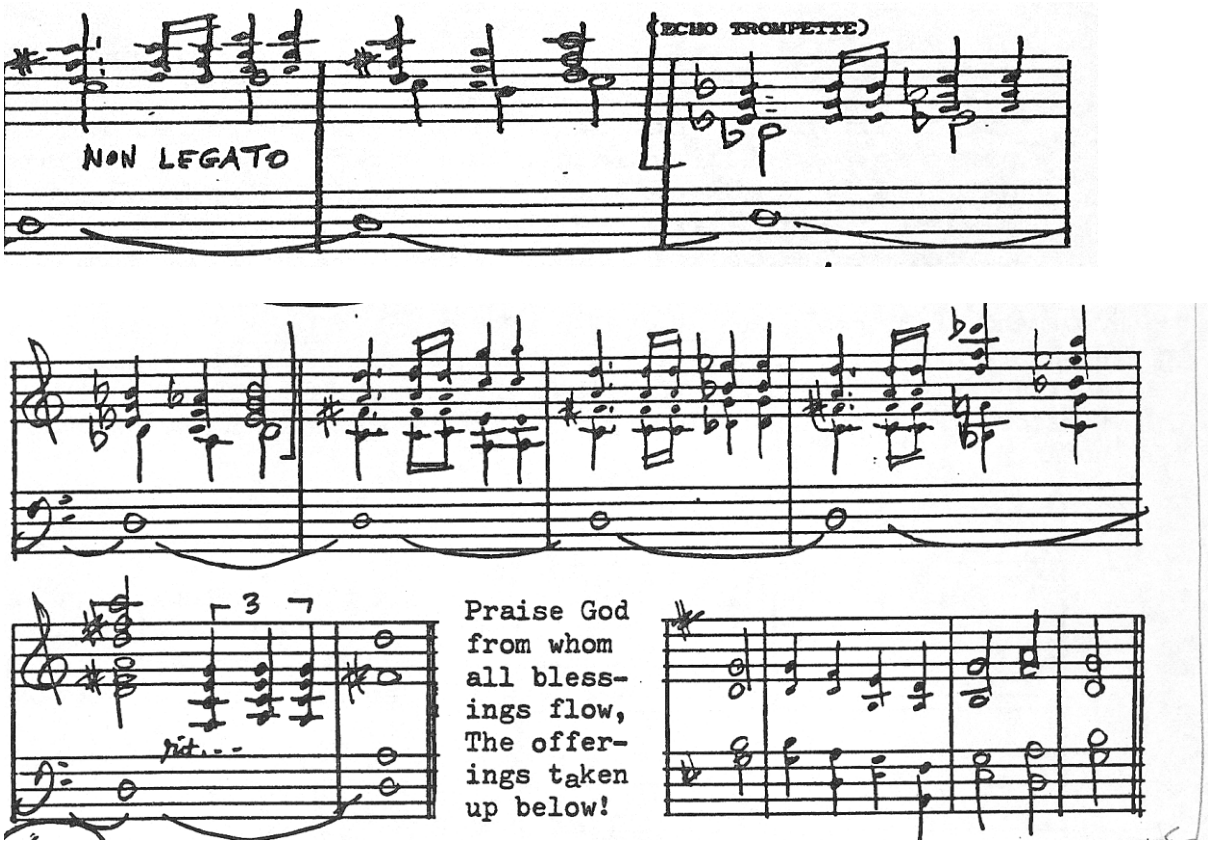
11. Pedal point

Pedal point refers to "a long, sustained note held through many bars while movement continues in other parts of the piece."[58] Hancock creates a pedal point simply by adding a tonic or dominant tone as a fifth voice. Rotermund explains that pedal points are an easy method to create harmonic variety, and Hilty also cites the use of dominant pedal points in the pedal as "a common modulation device."[59] Example 44 shows the effective use of the dominant pedal point as a modulation device.

58 Paul M. Walker, "Pedal Point," *Grove Music Online*, ed. by L. Macy (accessed 27 May 2009), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

59 Hilty, 35.

Example 44: Hilty, p. 36.



12. Text painting

Overduin suggests imbuing improvisations with concrete stories or images, complementing them with a matching style, tempo, registration, and rhythm, similar to the free Baroque organ works that were associated with specific biblical stories.

Eben demonstrates several methods for text painting. For example, in cases where the text is an urgent, emphatic cry, he recommends an accompaniment that creates a more dramatic atmosphere, employing two massive chords and repeating them over and over again as shown in Example 45.

Example 45: Eben, p. 11

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As another example of text painting, Eben also employs increased dynamics (forte), dotted rhythms, staccato octaves, and a wealth of major chords in order to express the theme of rejoicing in the spirit of Christmas; this is shown in Example 46.

Example 46: Eben, p. 21

Eben EVANGELISCHE CHORÄLE
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13. Interlude

To ensure a smooth flow to the service, organists must be capable of connecting one piece of music to the next, or transitioning to the next event in the service, sometimes without knowing how long that gap will be.

Though interludes normally comprise musical material from the piece, including

thematic or rhythmic material, they are generally in a different key (or keys) than the original.

1) Exercises

As previously stated in Chapter 1, Hancock emphasizes the idea of a "non-musical" written outline as a means of preparing for improvisation in addition to an outline comprising musical notation.[60] He teaches that in order to practice improvising interludes, one should first organize an improvisation with this non-musical outline. Non-musical outlines include such specifics as keys, thematic materials, the number of measures of each phrase or segment, the number of segments, and the number of voices, as shown in Example 47.

Example 47: Hancock, p. 45, "Non-musical" or "Written" Outline

Phrase 1: four-measure question plus four-measure answer (three voices, tonic key)

Phrase 2: four-measure question plus four-measure answer (two voices, dominant key)

Phrase 3: four-measure question plus four-measure answer (three voices, tonic key, optional variations of phrase 1)

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Next, one should organize the interludes with an outline in musical notation, as can be seen in Example 48.

Example 48: Hancock, p. 48-49, the outline in musical notation

60 Hancock, 45.

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Each segment is a transposition of the original segment. The keys of these segments are closely related; they are either related by the circle of fifths or as relative major and minor chords. The last step is to practice each segment individually and then to connect the segments with small alterations.

2) A higher key for the last verse of congregational hymns

Hancock suggests that modulating up a half-step to a higher key for the last verse is easily accomplished by treating the tonic note of the original key as the leading tone of the new key. Example 49 shows the simplest method – playing two chords successively. The

tonic chord of the original key (G major) is followed by the dominant 7th chord of the new key (Eb7), subsequently leading to the tonic chord of the new key (Ab major).

Example 49: Hancock, p. 55

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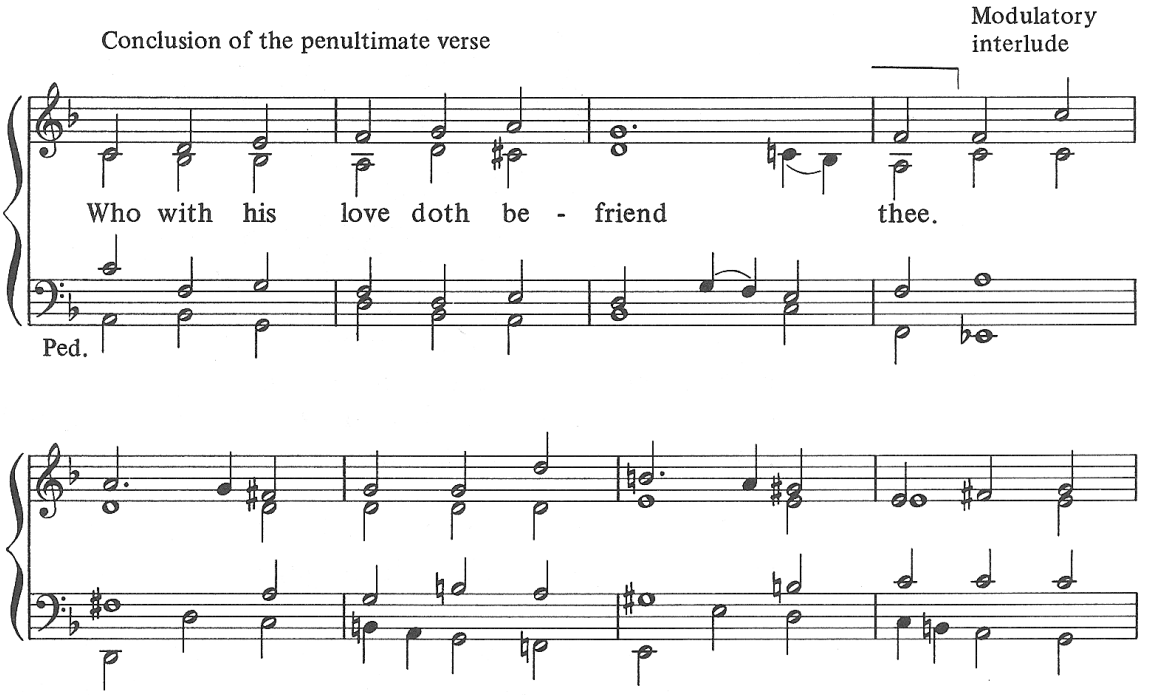
Overduin, as well as Ritchie and Stauffer, in *Organ Technique: Modern and Early* mention that a modulatory interlude should begin without a break in order to avoid confusing the congregation, which might be tempted to sing the next stanza and end on a dominant or tonic chord, as shown in Example 50.

Example 50: Ritchie and Stauffer, p. 363

Lobe den Herren



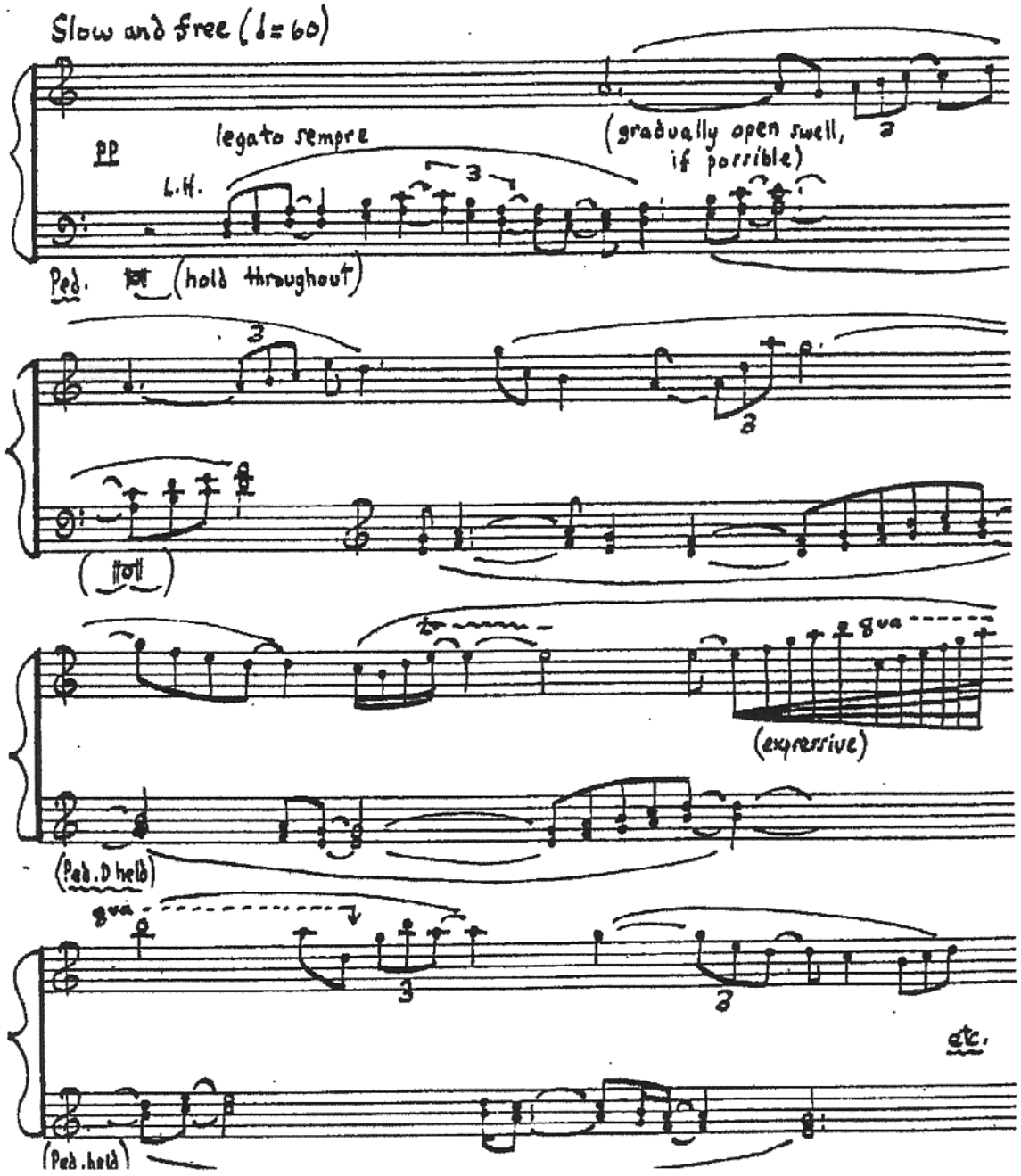
'Organ Technique' by Ritchie and Stauffer © Oxford University Press, Inc. 2000. All rights reserved.

14. Pandiatonicism

Neff, in his article "Improvisation at the Organ," recommends pandiatonicism, a kind of harmonic texture that uses the notes of the diatonic scale, for beginners; this texture tends to blur the feeling of chord function and obscures the differences between "wrong" notes and "right" notes. This technique was frequently used by Stravinsky and Copland.[61] Example 51 shows a musical selection containing pandiatonicisim.

Example 51: Neff, P. 44

61 Jerome Neff. "Improvising at the Organ," *Clavier* 8 (November 1969): 45.



15. Figurations created by parallel intervals

"A prominent component in many attractive organ compositions is two or more parts moving in parallel motion for multiple beats, sometimes longer."[62] For beginners, the use of successive parallel intervals is an important improvisational tool.

62 Rotermund, 187.

In the following example from J. S. Bach's Cantata No. 208, parallel thirds and sixths are continuously used in the right hand, illustrating the effectiveness of this technique.

Example 52: "Sheep May Safely Gaze" by J. S. Bach: Rotermund, p. 187

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1) Figurations with parallel intervals: thirds, sixths, and tenths

Overduin's book provides several step-by-step exercises for practicing parallel thirds and sixths. The following are summarized steps:

a) The first step is improvising four to eight measures, combining scales and triads.

b) Next, add some non-harmonic tones and use ties in order to create suspensions.

c) While playing a hymn tune in one hand or in the pedal, improvise parallel intervals in the other hand or in the pedal.

d) While playing parallel intervals in one hand, improvise a melody in the other hand.

e) Improvise parallel intervals in both hands with various rhythms.

2) Figurations with parallel intervals: 4ths and 5ths

In their texts, Rotermund, Hilty, and Hancock introduce a more "modern" type of chord, which consists of parallel fourths and/or parallel fifths. Hancock suggests practice as shown in Example 53. Play a fourth in the right hand and a fifth in the left hand separated from each other by a third. Chords created with these respective intervals can be used to successfully harmonize a hymn melody, regardless of the harmonic progression, as can be seen in Example 53.

Example 53: Hancock, p. 124

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16. Toccata

Most authors of improvisation method books give similar instructions in improvising toccatas. They recommend studying toccata figurations from organ literature, classifying toccata figurations into several groups, and practicing the figurations on different pitch levels. They also suggest practice melodies on the pedal and figurations in both hands.

Johns provides six categories of toccata figurations as can be seen in Example 54. I think that the categories are the easiest in understanding compared to categories in other method books and include most of cases. The figuration of Vierne's *Carillon de*

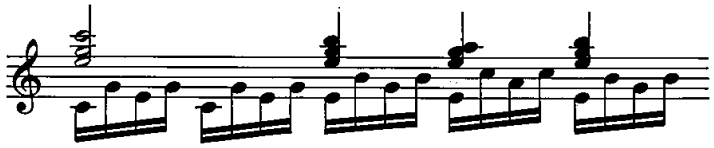
Westminster is merely part of a scale (*do-re-mi-fa-sol-fa-mi-re-do*) , so it can be called an example of diatonic patterns. The Toccata of Widor's Fifth Symphony is an example of broken chord patterns, while Mulet's *Tu es petra* is an example of alternating chords.

Example 54: Johns, P. 23~24

1. Arpeggiation

2. Diatonic Patterns

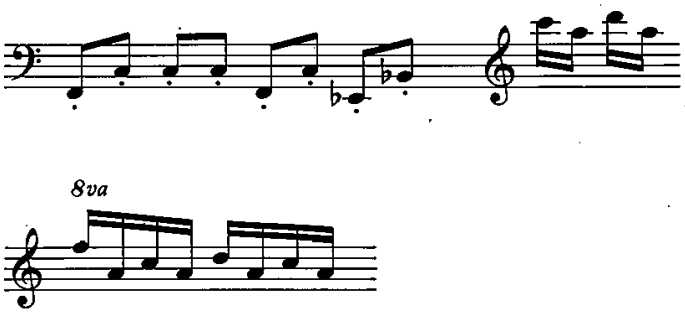
3. Broken Chord Patterns



4. Alternating Chords

5. Modules

6. Ostinato Figurations



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CONCLUSION

After careful study of a variety of organ improvisation methods, I have concluded that even lacking natural talent or inborn gifts, improvisation can be practiced and honed in much the same way as standard performance skills. It is my hope that this document will be helpful to organists – especially church organists – who endeavor to learn improvisation for their weekly services and are thus striving to improve themselves as more inspired and serviceable musicians.

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